

a first coupler, the first coupler having a first end and a second end, the first coupler being aligned along the first axis, wherein the first end of the first coupler is arranged to contact the first stage and the second end of the first coupler is arranged to contact the second stage; and

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a second coupler, the second coupler having a first end and a second end, the second coupler being aligned along the first axis, wherein the first end of the second coupler is arranged to contact the first stage and the second end of the second coupler is arranged to contact the second stage, and wherein when the first actuator causes the first stage to scan along the first axis in a first direction, the first coupler causes the second stage to scan along the first axis through the first coupler, wherein the first coupler is a stopper, the first end of the first coupler being a first end of the stopper that is substantially directly coupled to the first stage, the second end of the first coupler being a second end of the stopper that is arranged to contact the second stage to substantially push the second stage when the first actuator causes the first stage to scan along the first axis in the first direction.

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the rejections set forth in the Final Office Action dated October 22, 2002 is respectfully requested. Claims 1-4, 6-9 and 11-46 have been rejected. Claims 5 and 10 have been objected to. Claim 47 has been added. As such, claims 1-46 are currently pending. It is respectfully submitted that the limitations of claim 47 are fully described in the Specification.

Objections to the Claims

Claims 5 and 10 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner has indicated that claims 5 and 10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Since the Applicants believe that independent claim 1, from which claims 5 and 10 depends, is allowable over the art of record (as will be discussed below), the Applicants have chosen not to rewrite claims 5 and 10 in independent form at this time.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-4, 6-9 and 11-46 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Doran et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,585,629) in view of Toshiya Asano (JP 2000223410).